

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7660

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NDJAMENA 2785

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PBOR, CD, LY

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT MALLOUM VISITS SOUTHERN CHAD

REF: NDJAMENA 2749

SUMMARY. ON JULY 10 PRESIDENT MALLOUM BEGAN HIS FIRST OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE COUNTRY SINCE THE CSM ASSUMED POWER IN 1975. MALLOUM DELIVERED A BASIC MESSAGE TO THE POPULATION OF THREE PROVINCES THAT THE GOC IS PREPARED TO DISCUSS THEIR LEGITIMATE GRIEVANCES BUT WILL NOT PERMIT ANY FURTHER CIVIL DISTURBANCES.

1. FOR THE LAST FIVE DAYS, LOCAL MEDIA HAVE FEATURED PROMINENTLY ARTICLES ABOUT PRESIDENT FELIX MALLOUM'S FIRST OFFICIAL TRIP TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION OF CHAD. ACCOMPANYING THE PRESIDENT ON HIS VISIT TO THE PROVINCES OF MAYO-KEBI-KEBI, TANDJILE AND LOGONE ORIENTALE WERE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE ROASNGAR, INTERIOR MINISTER KOTIGA, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AHMED ISSA, SECRETARY GENERAL OF GOVERNMENT NGARMAYAL, CHADIAN AMBASSADOR TO CAMEROON HELENA TCHIOUMA, I.N.S.H. DIRECTOR FECKOUA
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AND CONTROLLER GENERAL OF FINANCES KASSIRE.

2. DURING THE TOUR MAJOR SPEECHES WERE MADE IN BONGOR, LAI AND DOBA, THE PRESIDENT ALSO HELD MEETINGS WITH GROUPS OF LOCAL OFFICIALS AND TRADITIONAL TRIBAL LEADERS IN ALL THREE REGIONS, IN ADDITION TO VISITING AGRICULTURAL AND ECONOMIC PROJECTS IN THE AREA SUCH AS

THE IRRIGATED AGRICULTURE PERIMETER AT SATEGUI-DERESSIA
AND THE CONOCO OIL WELL NEAR DOBA,

3. A READING OF INFOTCHAD TEXTS AND EDITORIAL COMMENTS
BROADCAST BY RADIO NDJAMENA OVER THE LAST FOUR DAYS MAKES
IT APPEAR THAT WHAT BEGAN IN THE PRESIDENT'S WORDS AS QUOTE
A DOUBLE THEME VOYAGE FOR POLITICAL DIALOGUE AND NATIONAL
RECONCILIATION UNQUOTE BECAME MORE A HARD LINE WARNING
AGAINST ANY FURTHER REGIONAL DISTURBANCES BY THE END OF
THE THREE DAY CIRCUIT. OPENING WITH THE FOREGOING QUOTE
IN HIS INITIAL ADDRESS AT BONGOR ON JULY 10 PRESIDENT MALLOUM
QUICKLY MOVED ON TO EXPLAIN THAT, WHILE THE CSM RECOGNIZED
THE LEGITIMATE GRIEVANCES OF MAYO-KEBI AND THE GOOD FAITH
OF THE MAJORITY OF THOSE WHO HAD DRAWN UP A DETAILED ECONOMIC
DOCUMENT HIGHLIGHTING THEM, CERTAIN OTHERS CAPITALIZED
ON SUCH COMPLAINTS TO CONVINCE THE POPULATIONS OF THE
REGION THAT THEY WERE SUFFERING FROM THE OPPRESSIVE ACTS
OF ANOTHER ETHNIC GROUP. THESE INDIVIDUALS UTILIZED HIGH
SCHOOL STUDENT AS A DETONATOR TO TRIGGER A SERIES OF
DESTRUCTION, PILLAGING AND MAN HUNTS. EVEN THOUGH THE
GOC HAD NOT TAKEN REPRESSIVE COUNTER MEASURES, THE
OUTCOME OF THESE EVENTS WAS UNFORTUNATE BECAUSE IT
ENTAILED THE CLOSING OF SCHOOLS FOR LACK OF TEACHERS, THE
SUSPENSION OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS DUE TO LACK OF SECURITY
AND THE PARALYSIS OF THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION DUE TO DE-
PARTURE OF CIVIL SERVANTS WHO HAD BEEN THREATENED.
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4. TO SAY THAT THE MAYO-KEBI REGION COULD EXIST ON ITS
OWN POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY SHOWED A TENDANCY
TOWARD REGIONALISM, AFFIRMED MALLOUM, WHILE A STATEMENT
THAT QUOTE MAYO-KEBI IS AS MUCH A REBELLION ZONE AS IS THE
NORTH, BEING A FRONTIER REGION WHICH LACKS NEITHER MOUNTAINS
NOR CAVES UNQUOTE WAS TO PROVACTIVE A CHALLENGE TO BE
IGNORED. THE PRESIDENT STRESSED THAT THE PROPER WAY TO
ADDRESS THE REGION'S PROBLEMS WAS THROUGH OPEN DISCUSSION
WHILE THE SORT OF ACTS WHICH PERMIT TRIBALISTS, REGIONALISTS
AND OPPORTUNISTS TO FURTHER THEIR OWN PARTICULAR
INTERESTS WOULD NOT BE TOLERATED.

5. MALLOUM'S SPEECH THE FOLLOWING DAY AT LAI RECEIVED
A FAR WARMER RECEPTION AND ACCENTED THE NEED FOR PEACE
AND SECURITY. HE CONTRASTED THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF
THE CSM WITH LACK OF DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE
TOMBALBAYE REGIME AND CRITICIZED THE AUTHORS OF THE
TANDJILE MANIFESTO OF IGNORING THE FACT THAT MANY OF THEM
HAD ACCOMPLISHED NOTHING AS OFFICIALS UNDER TOMBALBAYE
WHEREAS THE NEW GOVERNMENT HAD MANAGED TO RECEIVE
85,000 MILLION CFA FRANCS IN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

PROJECTS. AMONG THESE WERE THE 17,500 MILLION CFA AND 21,000 MILLION CFA ROAD DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS FOR THE AREA PLUS THE 6,250 MILLION CFA FRANC SATEGUI-DERESSIA IRRIGATION PROJECT.

6. PURSUING THE NATIONAL RECONCILIATION THEME, MALLOUM ATTACKED BOTH LIBYA FOR OCCUPYING THE AOZOU STRIP AND FROLINAT FOR TRYING TO DISMANTLE THE COUNTRY. HE COINED THE NEW PHRASE, WHICH SUBSEQUENTLY WAS REITERATED IN THE OTHER SPEECHES, THAT FROLINAT MEANT FRONT FOR THE LIQUIDATION OF THE CHADIAN NATION. HE WENT ON THE ENUMERATE THE VARIOUS RECENT ATTACKS AT SALAL, ARADA, DJEDAA AND ATI WHICH HAD FOLLOWED THE EARLIER ONES ON AOZOU, BARDAI, FAYA AND ZOUAR. THE PRESIDENT POINTED OUT THAT

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THE GOC HAD LAUNCHED IN INTERNATIONAL APPEAL FOR HELP AND THAT FRANCE HAD RESPONDED WITH SUFFICIENT FORCE TO PERMIT CHAD TO HALT THE LIBYAN ADVANCE. IT WAS NOT SURPRVRING THEN ATHT FROLINAT AND QADHAFI WERE INSISTING ON WITHDRAWAL OF FRENCH TROOPS AS A PRE-CONDITION TO FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS. OVBIOUSLY THE PEOPLE OF TANDJILE, AS OTHER CHADIANS, COULD SEE THROUGH THIS RUSE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 NDJAMENA 2785

7. MALLUM'S LAST MAJOR SPEECH, AT DOBA, ACCENTED THE HANDICAP OF POVERTY UNDER WHICH THE GOC LABORED. IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO CARRY ON SIMULTANEOUSLY A WAR EFFORT AND PURSUE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN ALL REGIONS OF THE COUNTRY. RATHER, HE SAID, IT IS NECESSARY TO EXPLOIT THAT WHICH EXISTS SUCH AS THE AGRICULTURAL BASE IN LOGONE-ORIENTAL. MALLOUM URGED THE LOCAL POPULACE NOT TO HOLD ANY ILLUSION CONCERNING FUTURE EXPLOITATION OF PETROLEUM RESOURCES, BUT, INSTEAD, TO WORK HARD TO DEVELOP AGRICULTURE PRODUCTION BY IMPROVING TECHNIQUES USED. HE STATED THAT CHADIAN PROBLEMS COULD BE RESOLVED BY ALL FACING UP TO THEIR OWN RESPONSIBILITIES RATHER THAN AWAITING SOLUTIONS FROM A CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. AT THE SAME TIME, A UNITED EFFORT WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE TO RISE ABOVE TRIBAL, ETHNIC AND REGIONAL INTERESTS AND UNITE AGAINST THE THREAT FROM QADHAFI WHO WAS WAGING A HOLY WAR AGAINST ALL CHADIANS. BEGIN C O N F I D E N T I A L

COMMENT. A NUMBER OF CONCRETE ACTIONS RESULTED OR WERE SANCTIONED BY MALLOUM'S SOUTHERN TRIP. HE CONFIRMED THE AUTHORITY OF CANTON CHIEFS, ESPECIALLY IN MAYO-KEBI, TO BE ARMED AND TO ARREST TROUBLE MAKERS WHO WOULD CONFIDENTIAL

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SUBSEQUENTLY BE TURNED OVER TO PREFETS AND SUB-PREFETS. A SEVERE WARNING HAS BEEN REPEATED TO INTELLECTUALS AND LOCAL OFFICIALS THAT THE KID GOLVES ARE COMING OFF. THE PRESIDENT AND MINISTER OF INTERIOR EXPLICITLY SAID THAT COOPERATION BY SOME LEADERS IN THE SOUTHWEST REGION WITH FROLINAT SYMPATHIZERS WAS UNDER SURVEILLANCE. THE GOC RECOGNIZED THAT THE TIMING OF CIVIL DISTURBANCES IN THE SOUTH AND THE APRIL ATTACKS BY FROLINAT IN THE NORTH WERE NOT COINCIDENTAL. ALTHOUGH NO REPRESSIVE MEASURES HAD BEEN TAKEN IN RESTORING PEACE TO MAYO-KEBI AND TANDJILE, THE CSM WOULD NOT HESITATE TO TAKE WHATEVER STEPS WERE NECESSARY TO AVOID ANY REPETITION. THIS IS PARTICULARLY SO IN THE CASE OF CIVIL SERVANTS WHO MAY HAVE BEEN AGITATED FOR PERSONAL REASONS. MALLOUM IS NOT NORMALLY GIVEN TO FLESH PRESSING, BUT IS LEARNING. ACCORDING TO SEVERAL SOURCES, THE PRESIDENT'S TRIP COULD BE TERMED A PUBLIC RELATIONS SUCCESS DESPITE THE HARD LINE MESSAGE HE GAVE CERTAIN OFFICIALS. WHILE HIS RECEPTION IN BONGOR WAS SOMEWHAT CHILLY, THAT IN LAI AND DOBA WAS FULLSOME. SEVERAL OF HIS PRONOUNCEMENTS CLEARLY WERE DIRECTED TO THE MASSES, WHOM HE PRAISED FOR THEIR CONSTANCY, AND NOT OFFICIALDOM WHICH RECEIVED GENERALLY MIXED NOTICES.

IT IS CLEAR THE PRESIDENT FEELS CONFIDENT ENOUGH FOR THE NONCE TO HAVE ABANDONED AN APPEARANCE OF APPEASMENT

TOWARD LOCAL DOLEANCES IN THE SOUTH. THIS COMES AT THE
SAME TIME THAT FOREIGN MINISTER KAMOUQUE TOLD THE OAU
FOREIGN MINISTER'S MEETING IN KHARTOUM THE GOC WAS
PREPARED TO MEET FROLINAT AT ANY TIME, BUT NOT IN TRIPLI.
THESE DECLARATIONS CONFIRM OUR EARLIER ASSESSMENT, SEE
REFTEL, THAT THE GOC SEES ITSELF IN CONTROL.
ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF CONTINUING REGIONAL PROBLEMS, WHICH
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WERE HIGHLIGHTED IN SPEECHES BY TWO OF THE THREE PREFETS,
MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE UNDERLYING PROBLEMS WILL NOT DISAPPEAR
MERELY BECAUSE MALLOUM SHAKES A STICK AT THEM. ANY NATIONAL
RECONCILIATION EFFORT IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS IS GOING
TO HAVE TO MAKE CONCESSIONS IN THE SOUTH AS WELL AS IN
THE NORTH. DALSIMER

NOTE BY OC/T: MESSAGE DELAYED IN TRANSMISSION.

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